

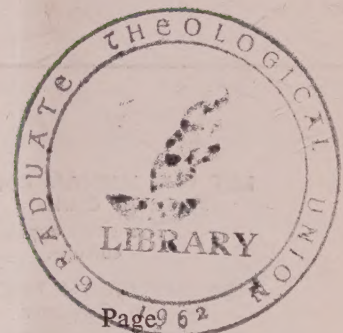
# The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

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# Integrated Rural Development



The Programme Unit on National Issues—an organ of the National Council of Churches in India—conducted a 'Workshop on Integrated Rural Development' in Madras from 18th to 20th September, 1980. The participants, numbering about a hundred were drawn from several voluntary agencies involved in programmes of rural development. Most of them were representatives of the different churches in India. The large numbers of participants as well as their active interest in the papers presented at the workshop and the discussions that followed highlighted the eagerness and earnestness of the churches in India to understand the basic causes of rural poverty in India and to search for remedies. This was recognised and commended by Dr. H. V. Hande, Minister for Health of Tamil Nadu Government, who inaugurated the workshop. This increasing involvement of the Churches in rural development is to be welcomed, provided it does not become a fetish ignoring the practical implications of the problem in hand.

The abject poverty of India, which keeps millions and millions of the people of India at a sub-human level of existence, has its roots in the innumerable villages of India. Even urban poverty which is seen written on the faces of slum dwellers and beggars in our towns and cities is nothing but a manifestation and extension of rural poverty. The urban slum dwellers and beggars are normally those who migrate from villages to towns and cities bearing the scars of landlessness, joblessness and hopelessness of the rural areas. It is therefore necessary that the complex problem of poverty in India should be first and foremost tackled in the rural areas. An effective attack on India's poverty can only be launched by going direct to the villages and dealing with the problems there.

Rural development means development more in human terms than in quantitative terms of physical and monetary targets. It means the provision of food, clothing, shelter, education, and health services, for everyone, under conditions which provide for universal human dignity. This would imply an approach as well as an order of priorities. It involves an integrated approach to promote the all-round welfare of the human being and the development of his personality by placing man at the very centre of the whole process of development.

In recent years, Churches and rural congregations in India have become conscious of their responsibility to promote integrated rural development. The challenge

of rural development is too great and complex to be tackled by government alone. Voluntary agencies, especially those under the aegis of the church, can play a very positive and significant role in rural development. The voluntary agencies of the churches with their tradition of service to the poor and the oppressed coupled with their close contacts with people in the villages are well equipped to tackle the problem of rural poverty and to create a new awareness among the poverty-stricken masses in the rural areas and to strengthen their will to be free from the shackles of poverty. In order to enable the churches and their voluntary agencies to fulfil this mission, governments in the states as well as the centre, should create a congenial atmosphere by removing all restrictions that some state governments have recently imposed on these agencies and their programmes of rural development.

## DIOCESES! PLEASE NOTE!!

Send your News and Notes !

*The South India Churchman* is your Official journal. You are expected to use its columns to publish the news and notes of events that happen in the dioceses. The readers of this magazine are eager to know what is happening in the dioceses. Such news and notes will go a long way in facilitating communication among the dioceses and between the Church of South India and other churches in India and abroad. They constitute the best medium to project the image of the church.

The Editor requests the bishops to appoint their diocesan correspondents who could send the news and notes of their dioceses for publication in the magazine. The news and notes from the dioceses should reach the editor before the 10th of every month.

If the dioceses do not send their news and notes, people will say: 'Nothing is happening in the Dioceses!' Let this not be said of any diocese of our Church.

So, Dioceses! Blow Your Trumpets.

EDITOR



# The Partners in Mission Consultation—the Province of South Africa

It was difficult to get endorsement on my passport to go to South Africa for this consultation. But through the untiring efforts of Major Michael of CASA and other friends, I got the endorsement though late, and I had a wonderful and rich experience in South Africa. They had planned everything in detail so that the members of the consultation who came from many African Provinces of the Anglican Church and also representatives of the Provinces of England, USA and Canada may have a clear picture of situations in the different Dioceses of the Province of South Africa. I was asked to visit two Dioceses, Natal and Kimberley. We, as members of the consultation, felt the apartheid and the racial discrimination practised by the White South African Government and its agonising unrest in the country.

On the day we arrived in Johannesburg for the consultation, 53 people, Bishops, Clergy and other Christian leaders who led a procession march against the arrest of a minister, the Rev. John Thorne, who was arrested on the ground that he induced the Black and coloured and Indian Students to protest against racialism and discrimination in education. The arrested people included the Bishop of Johannesburg, Rev. Dr. Desmond Tutu, the General Secretary of the South African Christian Council and also Mrs. Tutu. They were all in prison for 24 hours. They were released on bail, but the unrest of the students continues. Two school children were shot dead. You can understand the very grave situation that was prevailing at the time of the Consultation. But the racial discrimination that is practised by the Government is something very unusual and rather unchristian. Let me narrate a few of those :

## The Group Area Act :

The Government of South Africa has created what is called 'Bantustans'. Under this Act the Black people should register themselves as citizens of the Bantustan according to their ethnical groups or tribes. Year after year, thousands of families are grouped and they are prohibited from mixing up with the Whites. Black South Africans can exercise their political rights only in the Bantustans. Thereby they are forcing the Group Areas. Black Africans cannot own lands outside the Bantustans.

Outside the Bantustans the Blacks are re-settled away from the White settlements and in very remote dry areas. No compensation is paid for their old houses and they are simply left to themselves to build their own huts.

Another very pathetic situation is the Emigration Labour Act. According to this those who live in the Black Colonies are not allowed to move into urban areas with their families. They will have to leave their wives and children in the far away places, go to the urban industrial area and live in hostels meant for workmen. Thereby they are denied family life and they are exposed to all kinds of social evils including gambling, prostitution and drinks. This demoralises the whole Black community, as well as the white.

The whole country seems to be a spectrum of colours. Whites, Indians, Coloured and Black. They live in different sections. They have different schools, shopping centres, hospitals, etc. To think of their educational system is horrifying. The standard of education given to the Whites is the top most, and they spend about Rs. 5,000 per year on a child and it grades down along the lines. When it comes to the Blacks, it is just Rs. 500 for a child per year. I have seen the variety of the grades. The Blacks have no proper building, furniture, equipment and teachers. Thus discrimination has become a curse of the educational system of South Africa.

Therefore the consultation was very much agonising and we expressed ourselves very positively and said, 'The world was created before the Church and it was by God's love for this world and for persons created in His image which led to the incarnation of Jesus Christ who brought into being the Church to share in the mission of salvation of the world. Therefore the mission of the Church must be one of unity with the world-wide community and the Church is called to the mission to bear witness to Jesus Christ and to glorify Him by calling people to repentance and proclamation of the Kingdom of God.'

The five-day Consultation ended by condemning apartheid under racialism, and upholding the ministry of the Church towards building a new Society and the future planning of the Province towards a ministry of reconciliation. The Church must proclaim in words and deeds that there can be no compromise between the evil and injustice inherent in apartheid. The system cannot be amended, it must be eradicated.

I had the joy and privilege of preaching to different sections of the Society and getting to know the various programmes of the Church in meeting the needs of the people. There are effective Social Concern Organizations getting the mothers, the young and the children into active participation in the witness of the Church.



My greatest joy is that the Whites who are Bishops, Clergymen and lay members of the Church are actively involving themselves in moving, mixing and working with the Black, Coloured and Indians in such a way that I could see the future mixed Society which is going to evolve out of the tension of the hundreds. Perhaps a great revolution that is ahead of the South African Church and the Society. I am sure the Church is preparing itself adequately for the dawn of a new order of Society.

I visited quite a large number of parishes, groups of people and also got myself involved in the Social and industrial revolution that is taking place. The country is full of wealth buried underground. All the precious materials and gems lie buried and they are unearthing them

day by day. I went into their diamond mines. I saw how wealth is dug out the mines. Their resources are plenty. May the Lord help them to share it equally and live happily as God wants His children to live in sharing and in peace.

On my way back I stopped at Mauritius with the Bishop, visited the Theological Seminary and toured around a bit and saw the most fertile island with only about 50,000 people and two thirds of them are Indians. The present Government of Mauritius is led by Hindus of Indian origin. I also stopped at Seychelles for a couple of hours.

SOLOMON DORAISAWMY,  
*Bishop & Moderator, CSI.*

# ‘Christian Unity and the Holy Spirit’

(Ephesians 4: 3, 4)

The word ‘Unity’ has a wide meaning and connotation. Unity at once suggests the Church Union in South India. Of course we thank God for the great pioneers and leaders, both men and women, whom God has used; for their life of prayer, of togetherness and of service and of witness. Past thirty-three years have recorded tremendous strides taken by the C.S.I. We praise God for the untiring and indefatigable efforts taken by all the leaders of the United Church, both here in the South and also in the North.

However, St. Paul would like to remind us that Christian Unity is of a divine origin; that it is the Holy Spirit who was the inspiring and initiating influence in bringing Christians into unity (Ephesians 4: 3, 4). In this passage he mentions three things we need to note carefully.

1. That the unity is given to us by the Holy Spirit. cf., ‘The Unity which the Spirit gives’—V. 3. Therefore we are to endeavour to keep and maintain it in the bond of peace.
2. That there is ONE BODY—meaning that the Unity is already there. cf. ‘There is’ and not that there shall be, as if we are called upon to create it. Our task therefore is to discover this ‘God-given unity’, with the help and guidance of the Holy Spirit.
3. That there is ONE HOPE of our calling—meaning that we will all be one in the life hereafter in the presence of God. Paul’s argument is revealing: If we are going to be one in the life to come, why not be one here and now?

Once a Bishop had an interesting meeting with Christians belonging to two different denominations. One member died and there was no room in the cemetery belonging to his denomination. So the leaders appealed to the leaders of the other cemetery for permission to bury him in theirs. Permission was refused on the ground that the dead man did not belong to them!

A quarrel ensued and both leaders had to meet the Bishop for settlement. The Bishop in his sagacity and with his usual sense of humour smiled at them. The Church Union had just come and people were beginning to practise unity. The Bishop wanted to appeal to their sense of Christian unity. Still smiling, he asked them, ‘Are we not united on the surface and can we not also be united under the surface?’

Some of the obstacles which were there before and are still there in some form or another, and may come up again, are given below with reference to the working of the Holy Spirit, against them.

## Individualism and the Holy Spirit:

The Holy Spirit exposes the Truth, hitherto hidden. Billy Graham during his first visit to Kottayam, is reported to have made the following remark, concerning his first impression: ‘This land’, he said, ‘is a land of bananas, of umbrellas and of Bishops!’ Bishops, yes, because there were so many of them! Each representing a denomination. ‘Individualism’ is an obstacle to Church Union and Christian Unity. It is groups of Christians trying to exist on their own—a kind of ‘religious aloofness’ under a distinguishing label, something like Pharisaism. What the Holy Spirit did and is doing now is to expose the truth hidden so far. The Truth about Christians is that under the different labels, all are Christians. We had failed to realize that under our different denominational labels we are all just Christians, with faith in Jesus Christ our common Lord and Saviour. Cf. ‘ONE LORD’ ‘ONE FAITH’ (v. 3). In the initial stages of the C.S.I., the Holy Spirit helped the uniting Churches to cast off their distinguishing marks. All came under the common caption, ‘The Church of South India’. There may be a danger that this ‘C.S.I.’ itself could turn out to be a larger and a more inclusive cover, who knows? What I mean is that we are mostly known as C.S.I. Christians; but here and there mention is made



of a denomination and name of a Church after C.S.I. Such distinctions may be all right for us Christians, but with reference to non-Christians, misleading. Christians all over must be known as 'Christians' only, thus showing our ONENESS in Christ. Archbishop Dr. Fisher once presiding over a very large ecumenical gathering of Christians at Amsterdam is said to have told them: 'We do not like one another very much; but we are VERY MUCH ALIKE!'—cf., How true that statement is?! (*Confessing the Faith in Asia Today* by John Fleming p. 199.) In a broader sense too, the Holy Spirit helps nowadays to lift away religious and racial labels to expose the great truth about all people everywhere that they are All God's children. 'That they All may be one', St. John 17: 20. We are increasingly led to realize that whatever race, colour or creed we may belong to, we are still God's children. cf., Eph. 4: 3, 4, 'ONE FATHER of US ALL'.

### Interpretations and Holy Spirit :

Biblical Truths are made subject to many interpretations. Human interpretations are more often than not, stumbling blocks to Christian Unity. THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE HOLY TRINITY, THE HOLY BAPTISM and the SABBATH—these are some to which we Christians give different meanings and emphasis. The Holy Eucharist is another important Truth. The true interpreter of the Bible is the Holy Spirit, Himself. Of old, He made God's will intelligible to human beings, especially to the Prophets, who could thereby boldly and clearly say: 'Thus saith the Lord.' Our own attempts to interpret can lead us to place emphasis on those that are not of the Holy Spirit. Above learned commentaries, it is to the Holy Spirit that we should go for inspiration and interpretation. In the early days of Church Union, the question of 'INTERCOMMUNION' was a thorny one. The Anglicans opposed it strongly, while the Free Church men were equally strongly for it. The Holy Spirit not only exposes Truth about Christians, He also leads them in to all Truth. Truth is essential as far as Unity is concerned. And 'all the Truth' into which the Holy Spirit will lead us. In matters like Intercommunion we should know what God wants us to know. The Holy Spirit led them to lay emphasis on the right point in such Theological Issues: it is the 'Spirit rather than the Form' which mattered. It is the grace and blessing received at the Holy Communion rather than the 'ecclesiastical Order'. This was how the Holy Spirit led them into All the truth'. (See Book, *The Church of South India* by Sundkler, p. 231 ff.) We know that in the understanding of the Holy Trinity it had been the Experience rather than the Explanation which was helpful. So also in Inter Communion. Leslie Weatherhead in his Book, *The Transforming Friendship* (p. 59, London, Epworth) says that a friend of his, once attended a Roman Mass. The Priest explained the theory of TRANSUBSTANTIATION. After the service, his friend asked one of the worshippers, if he understood all that the Priest had claimed. The worshipper, an old man, replied, 'When I come to the Mass, Sir, I cannot follow what they do up at the altar. I just kneel down and think about Jesus. I think about the last week with His friends and

the Last Supper. How He knelt in agony in Gethsemane; How they arrested Him and all night tortured Him and how He died.' The old man's eyes were full of tears as he spoke. He continued 'I got very near Jesus then, Sir, and when I go home I feel that comes with me'.

### Integrity and the Holy Spirit :

The very serious obstacle to Christian Unity is lack of personal integrity. R. D. Paul in his book *Renewal and Advance* mentions that it is a real quality. The Holy Spirit uses Christian Unity as a challenge—a challenge to bring both Christians and non-Christians to the TRUTH, even JESUS CHRIST. Jesus Himself has said 'I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life'. First the Spirit's challenge is for *Spiritual and Moral solidarity*. Look at the modern world. There are terrifying days. Murders, daylight house-breaking, cruel and brutal acts, killing and abducting innocent children, molestation of women, crimes unthinkable and all kinds of social evils. Increasing crimes and cruelties seem to be the order of the Day! Our moral standards are devastatingly low. We seem to be no better than the old Gentiles of whom we read Romans 1: 18 ff. *But can there be a better and nobler life? A life of peace and harmony; of purity and goodness will and are we not Christians to show them that there is a way and that it is to follow Jesus Christ closely? Integrity therefore, is in following Christ closely; to be behind Him in Spiritual and moral solidarity. All Christians everywhere are strictly to follow Him.*

### The Spirit's Challenge is for Evangelism :

Jesus Christ said that there are other sheep outside the Fold and they also He must bring into the ONE FOLD (St. John 16: 16). We Christians are to help Him bring others into the ONE FOLD. What the world still wants is 'We want to see Jesus'. Unless ourselves follow Him closely how can we attract others to follow Him? Enough of our Propaganda, enough of our Printed Literature! They have served their purpose and it is time that people saw Christ in our lives. Under the title 'The Church in the Uncertain Eighties' by Mathai Zachariah in (*South India Churchman*—June 1980) we read: 'The life style of the individual Christian and the church as a whole will be the most important factor in our witness in the future. We have spoken enough. Can we speak through our lives now? Late Dr. D. T. Niles once said 'Evangelism is not the Church's programme; but it is to be a Christian'. A life of evangelism is being done by Christians who are united and so the effect is likely to be lost. It is to the Christians' United Front all over that this challenge is addressed by the Holy Spirit. (See Acts 1: 8.) God's call today is to a life of simplicity, sincerity, to chastity and to Charity; to a life of service, sacrifice and suffering. We may, in trying to obey this call precipitate persecution, but we have to be prepared for it.

REV. D. M. SAMUEL  
Madras.



# The Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies

## Golden Jubilee—1930-1980

The Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies is a Christian Study Centre for the study of Islam and Christian-Muslim relations. It began as an ecumenical undertaking and has extended its services to both the Protestant and Catholic Churches of India. The headquarters of the Institute are located in Hyderabad and include offices, a library, a meeting room and staff apartments.

In April, 1928, largely on the initiative of some of the Mission Societies of the U.K., the N.C.C. Committee for work among Muslims was convened at Lahore to consider the possibility of starting some kind of Study Centre on Islam in India. At this meeting the purpose and programme of such a Center was proposed to include the following :

1. Research by staff members with special reference to Indian Islam.
2. Training Christian workers for witness and service among Muslims.
3. Preparation of Gospel Literature suitable for use among Muslims.

As a result of these decisions the Henry Martyn School of Islamic Studies was inaugurated in Lahore in January 1930 under the direction of Rev. Bevan Jones. It is significant that the first resident students were three women from South India, indicating not only the all-India character of the School but the all-India character of the mission to Muslims.

The following years saw many changes. The Center moved from Lahore to Landour to Aligarh to Jabalpur to Lucknow and ultimately to Hyderabad. The nation moved through the suffering of partition to the freedom of Independence. The responsibility and initiative for Christian Mission in India shifted from overseas Churches to the indigenous Churches. The Henry Martyn 'School' became the Henry Martyn 'Institute' in an effort to achieve a wider and more flexible ministry. Still the Original aims and purposes remain essentially unchanged.

Today the Constitution of the H.M.I. states that we are here 'to assist the Church and other institutions to realize and fulfil their evangelistic obligation to Muslims by fostering an adequate and sympathetic understanding of Islam'. Sometime it is necessary to underscore the words, 'to assist the Church' since suggestions are made that would in effect have the H.M.I. doing the task on behalf of the Church.

Study and research are essential to continuing religious encounter. Staff members try to keep in touch with

developments in the thought and life of the Muslims community. In these efforts the H.M.I. has developed a library that is one of the best resources in India for Islamic studies.

Perhaps it is through training programmes of various kinds that the H.M.I. can serve the Churches most directly. The most common form of training is through short institutes sponsored by a regional or local group of Churches or some institutions. These may be organised for some special group of people such as pastors, students or Bible women etc. More often they are open to any Christian who is interested in Evangelism and we have a mixed group. These programmes are designed to provide a basic understanding of Islamic faith and practice, the common issues of misunderstanding between Christians and Muslims, and attitudes that will help open the way for communication and understanding between Christians and Muslims. The H.M.I. tries to maintain special relationship with theological colleges and seminaries as well. It has sponsored special seminars for theological professors, and longer institutes for seminary students. The H.M.I. staff has frequently been invited to Protestant and Catholic institutions to lecture on Islam as part, of or a supplement to, the regular syllabus of study on other religions. This is an important aspect of training young men for the ministry. The programme in literature takes many forms. Booklets have been published which correlate to the material generally covered in the institutes and deal with topics such 'An Introduction to Islam', 'Christian Witness Among Muslims' and the misunderstandings that arise concerning Jesus, the Scripture etc. In addition there have been numerous Bible Correspondence Courses and tracts that have been written, edited or translated with the Muslim reader in mind. Much of this material is available not only in English and Urdu, but also in Hindi and various other regional languages.

Wherever possible, the H.M.I. has worked in collaboration with various Churches in the publication of these materials and, especially with respect to correspondence courses and tracts, the primary responsibility for the effective distribution of gospel literature among Muslims rests with the Churches. There are many areas of opportunity here.

The H.M.I. publishes two quarterly journals. *The Bulletin* in English, includes articles, reports, reviews and comments by both Christians and Muslims on issues of mutual concern. *Huma*, an Urdu periodical, is also intended as a forum for continuing Christian-Muslim dialogue.

(Continued on page 9)



# 'Communication in Rural Development'\*

Communication has become a common but important word in the world today. Life is communication. Communication is the fabric of life, and without communication human life is nothing. When the fathers of the Church searched for a word to suggest in human language how the persons of the Trinity and the two natures within the person are related, they used the word '*communicatio*'. Communication is our attempt to be contemporaneous with our own history, to participate in history, to be a part of history, so that our life could be meaningfully lived relating it to what is happening around us, correcting ourselves with the lessons of history and receiving inspiration from it.

## I

So first of all I want to share with you some recent insights about communications.

(a) All media are the extensions of some human faculty, psychic or physical. The wheel is the extension of the foot; the book is the extension of the eye; clothing is an extension of the skin; the radio is the extension of the ear etc.

(b) We are today aware of a creative relation that exists between the 'word' which we use to communicate and the 'world' to which we communicate, between language and reality. Language is not a simple vehicle for transporting objective facts and information. Language is a loaded weapon. It enters into the very perception of reality at the outset itself. Facts and information are inseparably shaped by the language in which they are conveyed. We have to take the medium as seriously as the message, if we are to effectively communicate. In other words the medium itself is the message. Mark Twain has in one of his books given the story of a buffoon who came to the stage and announced: 'The manager has asked me to tell you that the circus tent is on fire. Please get out.' The spectators only laughed. After a few seconds he came back again and pleaded in anguished terms to get out. But no one got out and they laughed uproariously. But soon they found that the tent was really on fire! The medium (buffoon) and the message (the warning to get out) are identified in our minds. The medium is the message.

(c) Many communication philosophers today believe that the dominance of print over the other media has reached its end. Historically the connection between print and Protestantism has long been known. A Bible in his hand made every Protestant his own priest. But this is all over. We have moved into a time when the electronic media has taken over most

of the communication work. There are today many who question this, but I think we cannot gainsay the fact that electronic and the 'other' media (drama, music etc.) are increasingly becoming important for our communication efforts. In these 'other' media the communicator plays an active role.

We shall come back to these three points later.

## II

What is the purpose of our communication—Christian groups and individuals involved in communicating rural development? The core of the Christian message is simple, perhaps terrifyingly simple, but the task of presenting it in the particular complexity of context, in which we find ourselves in India today, demands the best of our intellectual and spiritual efforts. And what is that context?

— It is a context basically of the rejection of Christianity, but not of Christ.

— Today there is increasing resistance to direct Christian work of any sort, and for the expression of Christianity through our Institutions. Our institutions have been dwarfed by the massive institutions of the welfare state.

— The Church itself has moved into a new understanding of its mission and evangelistic task. The problem of cultural, religious and confessional pluralism is driving us to dialogue and a deeper understanding of others and into an existential catholicity. 'How can we proclaim the uniqueness of Christ in the age of universal history?' is our big problem today.

— All these are naturally leading us to the need for a new apologetic which recognises Jesus Christ as the hidden dynamism of history and of the Church, his 'eucharistic' (suffering) presence in the world. And the purpose of our communication effort is to make this hidden dynamism visible. Of course the old methods of evangelism (e.g. street corner preaching, tract distribution, door to door visits) are no longer valid, nor often possible in India today.

## III

In this context what do we communicate? How do we communicate?

First of all there is nothing called Christian Rural Development, just as there is no Christian Mathematics or Physics. Communication is not the extension of the Church's public address system. There are only Christians involved in rural development, and our task is to communicate insights about rural development to people in need.

\* A paper presented at the workshop on Integrated rural Development held at Madras under the auspicious of the NCCI-Programme unit III on National Issues.



(a) In this connection our first task is to depict the human situation. The human situation in India today is one of poverty, exploitation, over population, malnutrition i.e., of deprivation and stagnation and the dehumanisation of man. For us in India today man is all important. The struggles we find around us today for justice are struggles for the future of Man.

(b) The purpose of our communication in such a situation of stagnation is the 'awakening' of man, his 'conscientisation', so that he may be his own changeagent for a social revolution. The 'awakening' of man can happen only under the influence of some values. Some years ago I saw an exhibition of paintings by the Russian born artist Nicholas Roerich at Delhi. Roerich married the Indian film artiste Devika Rani. Roerich and Devika Rani were at the exhibition. One of the paintings entitled 'Awakening' was a beautiful painting of Eve in the Garden of Eden. I asked Roerich why the painting is called 'Awakening'. He said that Eve has become suddenly awake to the womanly possibilities in her, under the awe inspiring beauty of the Eden. The 'awakening' happens under the influence of aesthetic values. This is true also of the awakening to our socio-political responsibilities. And this happens under the influence of ethical, cultural and social values.

We have unfortunately missed the social revolution in India and are today bogged down in the mire of divisive purposes. Forces of reaction have gathered enough strength to block any efforts for change. Gunnar Myrdal in his three-volume study, *The Asian Drama*, on the whole issue of social change in Asia has India as the main case study. He says India has missed the social revolution and forces of reaction—the upper classes, army, police, landed people etc. have gathered enough momentum to forestall any attempt at change. We have awaken people to all their latent possibilities. If we embark on such a struggle we are entering a difficult area where we may be called to sacrifice many things we hold dear. 'But dying we live'.

(c) We do not stop here. Part of the purpose of our communication is to give man and society a new value orientation. The total life of our society is today conditioned by the fact of change, at least a desire for change. In such a situation the tendency is to move from the traditional to the rational, from the sacred to the secular, from the rural to the urban, from the *laissez faire* to socialist society. Flux has become the stuff of which life is made. It becomes the law of life, and so our value-schemes also change. We Christians can project a value-scheme rooted in Christ, but if it is to be effectively received, we should have others standing with us, or we must stand with others and proclaim them. Communication is not what we give, but what the other man gets. What we need are some mutually acknowledged values. Let me give an example. Thomas Aquinas started from the rational principles which his opponents accepted. And Aristotelean philosophy was the mutually acknowledged criterion. Shankaracharya has said that when two things are compared they should be compared with reference to what they have in common. What are the mutually acknowledged criteria in India today? I can find some newly found values—values relating to the dignity of man, justice, equality, freedom of thought and expression, values that reflect democracy and socialism and the struggles of the poor man—which

Christians share with all those who take human life seriously. These ought to be the themes of our communication. This is our point of contact. People listen when we speak on matters that touch their immediate life—food, shelter, raiment, happiness, the future of their children. Speak of these. The Church in India is a microscope minority—2.3%. With not many strong, with not many wise, we can still stand with others, but as people who are gripped with a unique vision and point to certain higher values.

(d) We should go one step further. Our most important task is to face man with the ultimate questions of life. In spite of his apparent self-confidence, modern man is helpless when faced with the question of death. There his defences crumble. In Alexander Solzhenitsyn's Nobel Prize winning novel, *The Cancer Ward* there is a character Ludmila Afanasyterna. She is a doctor in the cancer ward of a provincial hospital. She handles hundreds of cancer patients and instills confidence in them. Then one day it is known that she herself is suffering from incurable cancer. It is said that the truest test of a doctor is to suffer from the disease he specialises in. Ludmila goes to pieces before the crisis. Marxist philosophy cannot help her. She lacks the 'courage to be'—Most people are like her.

There are moments in life when man is concerned with ultimate questions than the ordinary—when one is faced with starvation, or illness or death, or a crisis of some sort. But even ordinarily, all men, in different forms and varying degrees, ask themselves such questions about their being and becoming—'from what substance did I come from to this splendid form and spirit?' 'Am I a moth to glitter for a moment, or am I made of immortal stuff?' The communicator should constantly try to answer these ultimate questions. Most modern classics, especially novels, deal with such questions and that is why they are read.

In rural India today we have a great opportunity to lead men from the existential anxiety to the eternal verities. This is what our communication should be about.

#### IV

But are we being specifically Christian in doing the four things mentioned above? I think 'Yes'. Whatever is human, really human, is Christian. This is the meaning of the Incarnation. Our pioneer missionaries started just with evangelism. But with no volition on their own part they soon found themselves in the field of social work, in response to felt and urgent needs in society. The Gospel always should speak at the point of the needs and struggles of humanity, at the 'bleeding points of humanity'—so to say. We are no longer called to the mission of the towel and basin only; we are called to share in the toils of the revolutionary.

I started by mentioning some recent insights about communication. All of them point to the importance of man in the communication area—all media are the extensions of man; the medium (man) and the message are identified as one; the communicator plays a continuously active role in the art and science of communication. Some years ago the Ford Foundation con-

(Continued on page 14)



# Some Aspects of the Christian Concept of God\*

By

CHANDRAN DEVANESEN

At the very outset let me say that I am a Christian layman with no formal schooling in theology or philosophy. But I believe every man is his own theologian because, somewhere in his mind, he has a concept of God. Even an atheist has a concept of God which he is rejecting.

May I also say that it is a happy thing that we have passed from the stage of 'comparative religion' to what I would like to describe as 'co-operative religion'. In the new religious and spiritual climate in the world today we are more concerned with 'partnership between religions' rather than 'dialogue about religions'. There is a refreshing atmosphere of humility in which we are prepared to learn from each other instead of arguing with one another. In order to be involved in a 'partnership of religions' we have to struggle to transcend the sociological and cultural conditioning we have had from our childhood so that we can join together with openness and friendliness in the search for Truth about God and Man.

Isaac Newton, the discoverer of the law of gravity, said that he was like a child collecting sea shells on the shore of the vast sea of knowledge. Where the knowledge of God is concerned, I personally feel I am like a child who has picked up perhaps a single grain of sand! So I will comment only on the two aspects prescribed for us, namely *Negation* and *Transcendence*.

## Negation

The Christian can agree with his Hindu friend that all we can say in response to all attempts to describe or define God is 'Neti, neti'—'Not that, not that'. If a man can comprehend so great a mystery in its entirety, in its totality—then he has no need of God—he can very well take the place of God! Involved in our negation of all attempts to define God are the elements of both rationality and humility. We can glimpse the Creator, the Maker and his Mind, through the rational faculties with which he has endowed us. But I feel Christianity puts considerable emphasis on the need for humility as we recognize our finiteness in the presence of the Infinite God. This need for humility is rooted in the Christian doctrine of Creation in which God the Creator is not identical with his creations such as Nature and Man. And this influences the Christian ideas of both transcendence and immanence to which I shall revert later.

To get back to negation, while it helps us to realize the unknowableness of God in his fullness, his complete-

ness, finite creatures that we are we cannot know ourselves spiritually on a series of negations. Therefore, we also need some positive affirmations about God if he is not to be a distant, abstract concept unrelated to man and human life. So man strives to know God in ways in which they can try to understand Him.

'God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in Truth', said Jesus. Our quest for God, in our search for Him, as we strive to grasp Him we can never exhaust the Truth about Him. We will tend to use all our faculties to understand Him but end up by making Him in our images accepting images from our own cultural heritage. These conceptions cannot be said to be completely without any value for us because, though limited, they are reflections of Man's search after God. Our images and concepts of God may reflect the moral and spiritual the cultural and artistic level reached by a particular civilization as seen in its mythologies, the forms of worship, the architecture of its places of worship, arts and crafts, in its music, song and dance. They are symbols for communicating truths (though not necessarily the Truth) about God born of history, culture, rationality and imagination, artistic creativity and poetic sensibility.

While accepting the utility of symbolism for religious life, Christianity is a religion of Grace and Revelation. While believing that the desire to know God is implanted in Man, the Christian also believes that such is the grace and love of God that He also saves out Man. Such is the meaning of the symbolism in the Genesis story when God walked in the Garden of Eden calling out, 'Adam, where art Thou?' As Evelyn Underhill put it, 'God always stoops' to step over the low lintel of the human heart'. And Christians believe that God's supreme act of self-giving or Kenosis was when he took the form of Jesus Christ whom we worship as the Son, the supreme revelation for us of the Father of God who did not flinch from the Cross.

Incidentally the concept of the Son of God has nothing to do with *sex* as Tertullian (circa AD 160-200) pointed out long ago. More recently a Christian theologian, Dhanjibhai Fakirbhai, has related the Christian doctrine of the Trinity to the relation of *Avatara* to *Brahman* seen in the *Brahma Sutra*. Badorayana who uses the illustration of the sun and a ray of light emanating from it to explain the relationship between God and His Incarnation. Another Christian thinker Mr. P. Chenchiah, has described the Incarnation of Jesus as the release of God's *shakti* into the cosmos and speaks of the cosmic Christ. To continue the thread of the discourse, Christ

\* A talk given at the inaugural session, July 20, 1980, of an Integrated Course on Comparative Religion organized by the Adyar Lodge of the Theosophical Society.



believe that ultimately Man's knowledge of God depends on God's gracious willingness to reveal Himself. He reveals Himself through the beauty of Nature though He is not in it or part of it but rather He is its creator.<sup>1</sup> He reveals Himself also partially to the extent to which our human and finite intelligence is capable of knowing Him. But for Christians the supreme revelation comes through Jesus Christ who, we believe, makes God intelligible to Man as God personified of God in the Son underlines personality as a concept of intelligibility and power. And by becoming man God also exalts human personality to a higher spiritual level. For the Christian, 'neti, neti' is also balanced by 'tatvam asi'—'thou art that'—but it is addressed to Christ with whom he seeks union rather than to himself. The Christian does not believe that identification or union with the divine is possible because he is also divine by nature. He can partake of the divine, and union and identification with it because of the grace and love of God which can transform his finiteness to make it possible. Therefore, he must approach God with humility and gratitude in which there is no element of claiming he also is divine by right of nature. There is a light that lightens every man that comes into the world—but that light is not in himself but in God.

### Transcendence

The Christian view of transcendence is that God the Creator is above both Nature and Man but not identical with either though infusing them with His spirit. Against this logical negation there is the affirmation of Immanence. God is not bound in anyway so that He can both enter and withdraw from Nature, Man and History as He is a totally free being. But in a sense, while Christians are aware of the awe and majesty of God seen in His transcendence, they are really more concerned with His Immanence because it gives them what they consider to be a positive and meaningful approach to human life and human history. A God who is 'dens absconditus'—missing from the human scene and unconcerned about the lights and shades, the joys and sorrows of human life is not particularly attractive unless, like Dean Swift, we believe that men are 'a pernicious race of little odious vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of this earth'! The Incarnation gave rise to a Christian Humanism which appreciates God who is lofty but distant and unconcerned, who is beautifully formed but fast asleep, as poetic but prefers a God in whose heart there is agony and suffering love for the fate of man within Nature and History, mortal and so very vulnerable in an immense universe.

Incarnation and Immanence can be tremendously meaningful in the world in which we live today. When we look at the hunger and poverty, the suffering and disease, the ignorance and helplessness of millions of people trapped in unjust socio-economic structures, in an unjust international order, where thousands are without human rights or homeless as refugees, where vast sums

of money are spent on armaments instead of human welfare—what kind of a God can we really believe in? This is not a period or an age of history when we can spend too much time speculating on abstract, abstruse metaphysical and philosophical concepts of God. We need a God who motivates men to act to remove poverty and injustice, to help men to recover the dignity and value of human life.<sup>2</sup> Christians believe we need a God who inspires men to act in history by being the inspiration of efforts to change the world in which, finite men depend, not so much on their own intelligence and resources, but upon the infinite power, love, mercy and goodness of a suffering God who stoops to save mankind by Himself living, dying and rising again in the form of a servant, putting aside His transcendent glory. The well-known hymn describes our response to such sacrificial love:

When I survey the wondrous Cross  
On which the Prince of glory died,  
My richest gain I count but loss  
And pour contempt on all my pride.

Again and again the pride of Man leads him into defiance and rejection of God but God does not seek to overawe him with his power and majesty. He seeks to breach his defences by coming in lowly guise to live, suffer and die for him. And that is why Christians believe—outrageous as it may seem that God's immanence is more meaningful to Man and his history than His Transcendence alone.<sup>3</sup>

Let me conclude by acknowledging that similar ideas and beliefs may be found in other great religions. As Christians we cannot claim any monopoly of the Truth. All we can do is to share with others the faith we hold in humility and without self-righteousness—for ultimately God's Truth is its own advocate.

### The Henry Martyn—(Continued from page 5)

During the last two decades there has been a growing awareness of the need for honest dialogue between people of different faiths. Not only is this essential for some degree of understanding and communication between people, but it is an expression of the Christian concern that our relationship with all people be built on integrity, credibility and love. During these years the H.M.I. has tried to nurture the avenues of dialogue with Muslims on many levels and has developed good relationship with many leading Muslim individuals and institutions.

The Henry Martyn Institute has a history peopled with men of high scholarship, great vision and patient dedication to the cause of Christ among Muslims. In the years that lie ahead it is our prayer that we may continue to serve the Churches of India as they seek to reach out to their Muslim neighbours in friendship, service and witness.

The Henry Martyn Institute is celebrating its Golden Jubilee this year on completing fifty years of successful Christian Ministry, with the theme as 'Alhamdulillah' (Praise be to God). The actual dates of the celebrations are 23-25 October, 1980. These celebrations would be held also in Bombay, Delhi, Bangalore, Calcutta apart from the headquarters in Hyderabad.

E. S. ISIAH,  
Staff Member.

<sup>1</sup> A critical evaluation and a refreshing restatement of this position is found in Ole Jensen's article entitled *Towards a New Theology of Nature*, Bangalore Theological Forum Vol. VII, Number I, 1975.

<sup>2</sup> This view is known as 'political theology' from a book of that name by Porothee Solle.

<sup>3</sup> See for example, Jurgen Moltmann's very striking account in the Friendship of Jesus' in his *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, SCM Press Ltd. 1977, pps. 114-121.



# Prayer and Therapy

*Paper presented as members of the CSI and CNI at the World Consultation held at Junaluska, North Carolina (USA) on 8-11 September 1980.*

## Alcoholism :

Alcoholism is the unlimited and uncontrolled swilling down of liquor leading to intoxication, causing disastrous effects on the central nervous system and damaging the liver—the largest and most useful organ in the human body.

## Drug Addiction :

Drug addiction is the inevitable consequence of habitual consumption of therapeutic sleep-producing and pain-killing drugs lured by the expectation of a euphoric experience of sedation. Addiction develops into a disease and inundates the mind and submerges the body in the sea of alcohol with an octopus grip. It leads to cytotoxicity and cell damage, crushed by the oppressive and annihilating tentacles of spirituous liquor.

## Taste becomes Passion—Habit Enslaves :

Human nature discovers a taste for something and by inescapable repetition cultivates the taste in such a way that it becomes a deep-seated longing for a particular thing that it does not, and cannot wriggle out of it. In the same way, once one starts drinking alcohol one gets addicted to it. The stress and strain of life, the mounting demands of Income Tax, anxiety and tension bombard the brain from multitudinous foci. Hence, man requires an aspirin, a drug or a tranquiliser in his pocket. Harassed by headaches and tormented by telephones he searches for a painless escape. Once he stumbles into the quick way of achieving this drowsy stupor by resorting to alcohol and psychedelic dopes like Morphine, Hashish, L.S.D., D.M.T., S.T.P., Methedrine, Marijuana, Heroin—he is a gone coon.

## Stupor Works Havoc in Human System :

Alcohol is absorbed by the stomach and acts through the Central Nervous and Autonomic systems. It produces vaso-dilatation, producing a warmth in the body and through the brain produces a euphoric sensation. It has a transient potency of short-circuiting tensions and worries and temporarily shutting off of the agony of anxieties and fears by helping to glide into the dazed bliss of forgetfulness and unconsciousness through slumber. This sleepy, dreamy exhilaration with its false sense of security, through the suspension of the senses makes man to indulge in this again and again leading addiction on to an in-extricable passionate enslavement to drugs and alcohol. When the extra pyramidal system is affected by alcohol and drugs, tremors and other attendant effects overwhelm the addict. Even if his mind resists his body compels and he succumbs.

## Logic Cannot Save Addicts :

What we need to remember at this point is that one cannot reason a drunkard out of his craze. He drinks to supply a real and deep-rooted need, which he feels in his flesh and in his blood. He will not give it up till

he feels a more reliable need and recognises a way to reach it. A man takes his first drink; then that drink takes the next and so on till the drink takes the man. It is futile, therefore, to take the bottle away from the man. We must take the man away from the bottle. Do not concentrate on symptoms. Go to the root and pull it out root and branch. Is it only science? Is it only man and all man?

## Thirst for Spirit :

Carl Jung once wrote what an alcoholic craves is was the equivalent, on a low level of the spiritual thirst of our being for wholeness 'shalom', expressed in Indian philosophical language: 'become one in a word with God'. 'Aham/Brahm/ashmi'. 'I am Brahman'. 'Tat Tvam Asi'. 'That art thou'. It is my conviction that it is the thirst of the spirit, that unquenched burning and draws him in hot pursuit of spirits. When the divine Spirit, indwells and penetrates the human spirit and the human spirit can say with St. Paul 'I, yet not I, but Christ in me', the miracle begins.

## Preventive Measures :

I shall not over emphasise the traditional advocacy of preventive measures as

- (1) government action—prohibition and penal laws.
- (2) preventive education and penalising liquor advertising.
- (3) personal example of temperance or abstinence.

We, the community, the society, the environment are responsible not the government, not even the addict. !!!

## Spirit of God—Spirit of Man:

And so, in the words of a member of Anonymous Alcoholics:

'And so, as a sober alcoholic, and as a Church member, I try to do what I can to help improve the quality of life around me. I try to speak kindly, do gently and honestly, think charitably, work hard. daily I fail in one or all of these, but just for today I don't drink either, for I have found a way of living that supplies me with those things which I never could find in a bottle; the courage to lose the ability to cope, the knowledge I need to live within my own limitations, the understanding which enables me to forgive myself for not being perfect and which frees me from endless guilt for the things I am ashamed of.

If we, as Christ's Church, can raise the thirst of the spirit higher in life, we can go a long way to solve these problems. Jung again: 'You say "alcohol" in Latin is "spiritus" and you use the same word for the highest religious experience as well as for the most depraving poison. The helpful formula therefore is: *Spiritus contra spiritum*.'



## Psychiatry and the Mind :

The very fact that a psychiatrist is called in to treat a case of addiction only indicates that addiction is part and parcel of the brain-complex. The brain with its Central Nervous and Autonomic Systems is a complex structure. The extra pyramidal system which is in the midbrain (Thalamus and Hypothalamus) play a large part in lessening the strangle-hold of addiction.

## Prayer is God's Therapy :

But, where, neither the psychiatrist nor the physician with remedial drugs could save the addict's body and mind, the spirit of the addict is still open. 'More things are wrought by prayer than the world dreams of'. Prayer has saved, reformed and transformed many drug and alcohol addict.

## Personal Anecdote :

A doctor of medicine working in a Brook Bond concern in Coimbatore, in South India is a standing testimony for getting rid of drug addiction of many years standing, by the prayers of his near and dear ones, who battled with him in and through prayer. This doctor is still active in Coimbatore and a living and preaching monument to the miracle of prayer. But for prayer, which he too joined by and by, he would have been an alcoholic corpse. But prayer can and does raise the dead too.

## Thalamus and Prayer :

The scientific explanation that is given for such a salvation is that by prayer the message is sent to the thalamus in the mid brain where it is analysed, reasoned out, interpreted, conclusions drawn and

determination forged to give up the habit to keep the body, the Temple of God, holy without any defilement.

## God Acts in and with and Through man :

Prayer is commitment to action and therefore, it is always mutual, bilateral and multilateral and never unilateral. Prayer is linking man's weak hands with God's own, and hence, where man fails 'alone', he succeeds with God. Without God man cannot; without man God will not. Therefore prayer works in companionship.

## Alcoholism is Illness not Bad Ethics :

Addiction to alcohol and narcotic drugs is not just self-indulgence which can be arrested at will but an 'illness' which eats into the vitals of the human body, mind and spirit. Hence treatment of this malady needs understanding, sympathy and even our Vicarious suffering for and with the patient.

## Faith works—Prayer Transfigures :

Prayer is God's instrument in human hands. What medicine lacks prayer supplies. Not prayer alone; not therapy alone, but together the ministry heals men. For, both belong to God and proceed from Him. Therefore, prayer and therapy should go hand in hand. 'Alcoholics Anonymous' operates on the belief that it is not faith or works, it is not even faith and works, but it is the faith which works; good deeds do not make a good man; but a good man does good deeds. Are you, my friend this good man or am I?

DR. V. SELVARAJ  
and

MR. A. C. DHARMARAJ

TELEGRAMS: TNSCBANK

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C03	36	124	05	310	10	620	25	1,240	50
C03M	37	130	55	326	45	652	90	1,305	85
C04	48	141	35	353	40	706	85	1,413	70
C05	60	154	15	385	35	770	75	1,541	50
C05M	61	167	25	418	15	836	35	1,672	75
C06	72	183	50	458	80	917	65	1,835	35
C07	84	203	05	507	70	1,015	40	2,030	85
C07H	90	213	60	534	05	1,068	10	2,136	25
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# News from the Dioceses

## KARNATAKA CENTRAL DIOCESE

Bishop K. E. Gill

The Rt. Rev. K. E. Gill was licenced Assistant Bishop of Newcastle on 5th September, 1980. We send our heartfelt greetings to him and pray that God may bless him abundantly in his new position.

### Pastors Retreat

The KCD Clergy Retreat is scheduled tentatively to be held from 29th to 31st October, 1980. Please keep these days free. Other details will follow.

### Evangelistic & Charismatic Groups

The Synod Theological Commission has appointed a small group which has been asked to make a special study of the above groups and prepare a statement for further Consideration. Therefore, the Synod Theological Commission has asked for details about the groups including any pamphlets or literature they produce. I shall be grateful if you could kindly send the above details pertaining to your area so that I may forward them to the Deputy Moderator who is the Convener of the Synod Theological Commission. The details may please be sent to me at the earliest.

### Bolivian Church Leader

The Moderator has endorsed the request of the World Council of Churches for prayer in our Churches for the immediate release of Bolivian Methodist Church Leader, Dr. Mortimer Arias aged 56, who has been in illegal detention of the Bolivian Military Authorities. Shortly after his return to Bolivia on 26-8-80 from a four-week visit to Methodist Churches in Brazil, Mortimer Arias was abducted from his home by a group of armed men in civilian clothing and taken in an ambulance to an unknown destination. He is now the General Secretary of the Confederation of Evangelical Methodist Church in Latin America, the Secretary for Evangelism of the Latin American Council of Churches now in process of formation and was a member of the WCC's Commission on World Mission & Evangelism and a member of the Executive Committee of the World Methodist Council. He was one of the most noted speakers at the Vth Assembly of the WCC in Nairobi (Kenya) in 1975. He is married and has two children.

VEDANAYAKAM AZARIAH

*Bishop in Rayalaseema &  
Moderator's Commissary  
in Kar. Central Diocese.*

### 'WEST BENGAL CURB ON MISSIONARIES'

Twelve foreign agency financed social welfare organisations, including Missionaries of Charity of Mother Teresa, have been prohibited from 'taking up any new programme in the tribal belt of Midnapore, Bankura, Purulia, Birbhum and Burdwan district'. This was

stated by the Minister of State for Scheduled Castes and Tribal Welfare Department, Mr. Sambhu Nath Mandi, in the State Assembly today, in reply to a question by Mr. Rajani Kanta Doloi, Deputy Leader of Congress (I), who had sought information on restrictions on welfare organisations in tribal areas.

'Some of these social welfare organisations are reported to have been maintaining links with separatist movement in Midnapore, Bankura and Purulia districts and their activities on many occasions have been found to be undesirable', the Minister said. The other eleven organisations barred from taking up any new programme are: Co-operation for America's Relief Everywhere; Church's Auxiliary for Social Action; Seva Kendra; Catholic Relief Services; Little Sisters of the Poor; Terre Des Homes (India) Society; Bengal Service Society; Oxfam; Society of St. Vincent De Paul; Assembly of God Church and Salvation Army.

(Taken from the Bombay Edition  
of *Indian Express* dated 29th  
August 1980.)

### CASA'S LETTER TO THE CHIEF MINISTER OF WEST BENGAL

Dear Mr. Basu :

Reference is made to the report under the title 'State Curb on Welfare Organisations' in the *Statesman* of 29 August 1980.

I am totally at a loss to understand on what basis Mr. Sambhu Mandi, Minister of State for Scheduled Castes and Tribes Welfare, told the West Bengal Assembly on Thursday last that CASA is one of the organisations which have been asked by the West Bengal Government not to take up new programmes if they had been maintaining links with separatist movements in Midnapore, Bankura, Purulia, Birbhum and Burdwan.

The flood relief and drought relief work of CASA in some of these places was taken up at the express request of the West Bengal Government. The Deputy Secretary of Relief and Welfare Department wrote to me on 28th December 1979 saying, 'I am directed to request you to be so good as to take up drought relief programme in the districts of Bankura and Purulia which have been severely affected . . .'. In consultation with the District Magistrates of these districts, CASA did take up tubewell sinking, food-for-work and child feeding programmes in a few places for 3 months or so. Since the drought is over, our programmes have been closed down and now we have no programme in the districts. It is therefore unfair for the Hon'ble Minister to make these remarks about CASA especially because it is the Government of West Bengal who took CASA into Bankura and Purulia.

CASA which started in 1947 at no time in its history had any links with any political party or movement. As the Chief Minister of West Bengal who took CASA



office on 9th November 1979 along with Mr. R. Banerjee, the Relief Minister. Kindly recall the speech you gave on that day. A part of it is quoted below :

• 'Now in regard to CASA, I must admit that we have been hearing about its activities even when we were not in the Government because you have been operating in this part and in many other parts of India for a number of years now. But since we came to the Government, we know, at least I know, a little more about its activities than I had heard and particularly during the floods, apart from your general programme which is there throughout the year, feeding children and nutrition activities and health activities and so on, that was a special occasion when we came in more intimate contact with your organisation and we are thankful to you for the work that you have done, not only during the floods but earlier also throughout the year or years through the programmes which are carried out.'

I cannot understand how the Minister of State for Scheduled Castes and Tribes can now say that we are having links with 'separatist movement'. We would like the public and the West Bengal Government to note that CASA had no programmes in the above stated districts which had to be stopped because of the West Bengal Government policy regarding voluntary agencies. Whatever programme we had earlier came to an end as the need was over and now as desired by the Government we shall not be taking up new programmes in these areas. Further, CASA has no links with any political party or movement in any part of the country.

Yours sincerely,  
(Sd.) G. P. RAO,  
Chief Zonal Officer  
Church's Auxiliary for Social Action.

## INFORMAL CONSULTATION ON THE AFGHANISTAN CRISIS

Budapest,  
26 August 1980

### Communique

At the invitation of Bishop Dr. Karoly Toth, President of the Christian Peace Conference, an informal consultation was held at Budapest on August 25-26, 1980, with representatives of the regional committees of the CPC who made critical comments on the statement issued by the CPC leadership on 22nd January, 1980. Representatives were from India, Sri Lanka, USA, Switzerland, France and Great Britain. Mr. Ninan Koshy from the WCC was an observer. Metropolitan Filaret, Chairman of the Continuation Committee and Dr. L. Mirejovsky, the General Secretary were also present.

Bishop Bartha greeted the Consultation on behalf of the Ecumenical Council of Churches of Hungary. Bishop Karoly Toth introduced the subject of the consultation with a statement and it was followed by an open and frank discussion in which all members participated, and different views were expressed concerning the events in Afghanistan. It was noted that these events were not isolated, but related to other international developments threatening peace and have to be understood in the larger perspective. It was also the conviction of all the participants that CPC work depends on a common commitment in fellowship with

Jesus Christ and differences in relation to this particular issue need not affect this fellowship. The consultation was also aware that particular situations of crisis are being used as pretexts for promoting arms race including nuclear armament. The participants were united in discerning the seriousness of the present threat of unclear war and want to commit themselves to work against this threat.

Equally important is the need to reaffirm the CPC solidarity with all oppressed peoples of the world and the determination to continue the fight against oppressive and exploitative socio-political structures.

The frank discussion and exchange of views helped to strengthen the fellowship among the participants and their support to CPC work.

## PASTORS STRESS GREATER INVOLVEMENT OF CHURCH IN DEVELOPMENT

A seminar on Development was organised for young pastors in Lucknow from September 9-11, 1980. Delivering the keynote address at the seminar CASA Director, Major J. K. Michael, said that the object of the seminar was to create a ripple in the life of the church and to enable pastors to develop new insights with regard to development.

Major Michael stressed the need for the churches to enter more and more into human affairs. He hoped that pastors would not only be agents of change in society, but, also catalysts for bringing about a change in the Church in India.

Earlier in his inaugural remarks Rt. Rev. J. R. Lance, Bishop of the Lucknow Episcopal Area, MCSA stressed that the seminar was a joint effort of the churches and CASA. The seminar had been organised jointly by the Methodist Church in Southern Asia, Delhi and Lucknow Episcopal Areas, the Diocese of Lucknow Church of North India and the Church's Auxiliary for Social Action (CASA).

Presenting a paper on the 'Theology of Development', Rev. Vinay Kumar Samuel of St. John's Church, Bangalore mooted the need for theologians, lay persons, sociologists, and economists to come together and develop a theology of social change by going through a process of joint reflection. Rev. Samuel opined that the church's involvement in development should be based on the biblical view of God at work in history.

Speaking on the need for 'Mobilising Local Resources for Development', Mr. Desmond A. D'Abreo felt that it was necessary for people to organise themselves to avail of facilities from agencies that provide credit facilities for development purposes.

CASA Development Officer, Dr. J. R. Singh stressed the need for the church to enable people to organise themselves around vital socio-economic issues, in order that they may avail benefits accruing from legislations promoting social justice.

Delivering the Valedictory address Bishop F. C. Jonathan stressed the need for the Church in India to become more involved in the life of the community. He emphasised the importance of looking at development from the perspective of the Gospel of Redemption.

The plenary sessions were chaired by Bishop Eric A. Mitchell of Delhi Episcopal Area MCSA and Rt. Rev. F. C. Jonathan, Bishop of Jabalpur CNI. Among those who took an active part in the discussions were



Rev. Baldeo Singh, Secretary, Council of Christian Social Concerns MCSA and Mr. R. K. Michael, Director, Ingraham Institute.

The seminar adjourned with Rev. J. P. G. Mandrelle thanking the organisers of the seminar, and in particular Rev. C. S. Das, of the Lucknow Publishing House, for the tremendous effort he put in.

ISAAC P. MANLIN.

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**Communication . . .**—(Continued from page 7)

ducted a study at Allahabad to find out what or who plays the most important role in the area of rural communication. It came out with the idea that it is the village level worker, the 'goan sathi' (the friend of the villager), who is the key to development and change in rural India.

We are all called to be 'goan sathis' in the rural situation. We no longer directly evangelise, for we understand that humanisation is evangelisation. But in this whole process if we stand with integrity and dedication, we will indirectly be pointing to some Christian values, and ultimately to Jesus Christ. We live at a time when more words have lost their meaning; life alone can speak. Is this 'apologia by artifice?' No. Teilhard de Chardin, the Jesuit Priest and famous paleanthologist, in his famous book, *The Phenomenon of Man* has an Epilogue. In it he says: 'As I am living at the heart of the Christian world, I might be suspected of wanting to introduce an apologia by artifice. But, so far as it is possible for a man to separate in himself the various planes of knowledge, it is not the convinced believer, but the naturalist who is asking for a hearing.' And yet, as one reads the work of science, and work of art—work of art because it essentially carries an intuitive vision of man and his future, of man moving to an 'omega point'—one is left with many deep questions about the nature and

destiny of man and the universe. Not a word is in the book about the Christian phenomenon. But slowly, eventually but inevitably, gets the feeling the Omega Point is Jesus Christ, in whom man history have their meaning. He could write this book not only because he was a scientist, but also because he was a genuine Christian. Can what do Chardin done for the scientific world be done at different level including that of rural development?

We have to learn a lot from the Indian tradition of communication of the sacred doctrine. The guru course transmits the sacred texts to the disciple. The words which the guru utters are initial and primary means of transmission. They perform the function of knocking at the door, just to awaken him. 'Real communication is non-verbal, it is from the heart to the soul. It is done at the *adhyatmic* level, till in the end Truth appears in all its splendour, resplendent in its own clarity.' Communication in the last analysis is communion.

MATHAI ZACHARIA

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**Book Review . . .** (Continued from page 15)

Bishop to see the Indian Church truly indigenised, is, rooted and grounded in its native soil. This is the very first book after 25 years of ministry in the Church. The Bishop succeeds at least in giving a clarion call to indigenisation that is rare yet most urgent in India today. One looks in vain for a Bibliography on this subject and Rs. 8 as price is rather forbidding, likely to add to the resistance to the topic of the book.

REV. M. AZARIAH,  
Secretary,  
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# BOOK REVIEW

**Let the Indian Church be Indian**—by The Rt. Rev. Andar Clarke—Published by the C.L.S., Madras, 1980. 16 Pages, price Rs. 8.

In his Foreward to this book Bishop Ananda Rao Samuel says 'This book is a major contribution by one from a Pastoral point of view', on the concern that *The Church in India should be more Indian and less alien*. In his introduction the author himself says that his book, 'is the expression of a burning desire for the Indian Church to be more Indian'.

There are eight chapters including one each for the introduction and the conclusion. In the concluding chapter the author says 'This book is being released on the 25th (year or Silver) jubilee of my ordination and also while celebrating the 150th year of the continuous priesthood in our family. It is nothing but the Grace of God that called my great great grandfather the Rev. John Devasahayam in 1830 to be the first South Indian to be ordained into the Church of God'. It is thus implied by the author that his concern arises from long years of involvement in Indian Church history by his family.

In Chapter II entitled, 'Spirituality in the Indian Church', the Bishop would suggest that 'with the fundamentals of the universal Christian faith we should try to explore distinctive expressions of Spirituality in our own culture' (P.5). 'We need to relearn devotional habits and grow deeper in Bhakti'. 'Somewhere the Ashram movement has not grown (P. 7) in India today.... So we need to suitably adapt the ashram movement' (P.8). The basic principles of Yoga could be taken, modified to suit man's Spiritual need and may well be adapted as Christian Yoga' (P.9).

Briefly describing the present state of '*Indian Christianity*' in Chapter III, the author points out that Christianity in India to the average non-Christian is the religion of the White man and Indian Christians are followers of the White man's religion', and is suspected to infiltrate Indian culture and perpetuate the Western style of life' (P.10). Against that, the Bishop wants the liberating love and knowledge of Jesus Christ must be suitably woven into the matrix and fibre of India and its people' (P.11). Discussing 'Leadership in the Church', the author says 'The era when the Indian Church was managed by foreign boards, Missionary societies and Missionaries is over. To be ourselves, the Church must be truly Indian and the leadership of the Church must be truly Indian'. 'Contextualization' is suggested (P.15) as the process to achieve such an end. By way of illustrating it, the Bishop asks, 'Why not we replace all candles and candlesticks with the Indian lamp (Kuthuvilakku).... Since it is in right context with our culture' (P.23). Chapter IV deals with 'Ministry in the Indian Church' discussing the roles of the Bishops, Pastors and the Laity in the Church. The author calls for making the Indian Church more the people's movement (P.38) and 'Right involvement of the Laity is the greatest need of the hour' (P.39). As for Bishops and Pastors the author says, 'We should find simple and meaningful words that in our different languages denote a Spiritual servant-hood and try to live that way' (P.28).

Chapter V on 'The Finances of the Indian Church' draws particular attention to the increasing potential in 'Christian giving' within the Indian Church and the need to overcome dependence on foreign missionary support. He even suggests that 'the moratorium idea which started in Africa needs to be taken seriously by the Indian Church' (P.54). 'The Indian Church will grow in selfhood, in self-reliance, in self-propagation only when foreign aid is stopped' (P.55). 'A mature appearance will be to approach our overseas friends not with begging bowls but giving platters!' (P. 57) 'Unity in the Indian Church' is the subject matter of Chapter VI. After briefly tracing the historical efforts in India that culminated in the formation of the C.S.I (1947) and the C.N.I. (1970), the Bishop refers to the Crisis in Contemporary Ecumenism. The Crisis, according to the author, consists in denominations outside union movements opting for Federal Union and the mainline Churches speaking of Conciliar Unity, thus avoiding the struggles towards Organic Unity. The Bishop seems to 'Visualize Conciliar unity as the beginning for God's children in India coming together', presumably into one single United Church of India.

'*The Mission of the Indian Church*' is considered in Chapter VII under three main heads of 1. Mission within, 2. Mission to other faiths, 3. Mission to the West. The author defines evangelism as 'the proclamation of the whole gospel (KERYGMA) in and by the whole people of God (ECCLESIA with KOINONIA) to liberate and change the whole of human life through service and witness (DIACONIA)' (P.81). He affirms that 'the Mission of the Indian Church is to recapture the vision and proceed into the future with motivation and with the goal that India must be brought to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ—'India for Christ' (P.81). It is apparent that here is an idealistic approach to Mission and Evangelism, which two concepts seem to be inter-changeable for the author. Before concluding that 'we lack a Co-ordinated strategy of evangelism in India' (P.89), the Bishop makes a brief survey of the existing methods of evangelism in the country. He bewails 'the existence of too many missionary structures, (P.85) and 'too many mushrooms coming up and some thrive on communal grounds' (P.86). As a bright new emphasis comes the statement, 'Evangelism must be Congregation-oriented rather than Organization-oriented' (P.87). It is also heartening to find that the Bishop calls for a Theology of Evangelism and a Master plan for Evangelism. 'The greatest need in the Indian Church today is an openness to other religions.... without syncretizing any without compromise to the fundamentals of Christian faith' (P.95). However the author only touches upon the vast topic of dialogue with other faiths just confirming he is for it. Touching his most favourite topic of 'Mission to the West' the author speaks of 'Partnership in Mission', as two way traffic 'but also an existence of sharing in equality, learning in equality and loving in equality' (P.98) and wants the Indian Church refuse to accept, an 'attitude of condescension, a lingering paternalism existing in the Churches of the West' (P.99).

Reflecting upon the whole content of the book one is impressed by the general and massive enthusiasm of the

(Continued on page 14)



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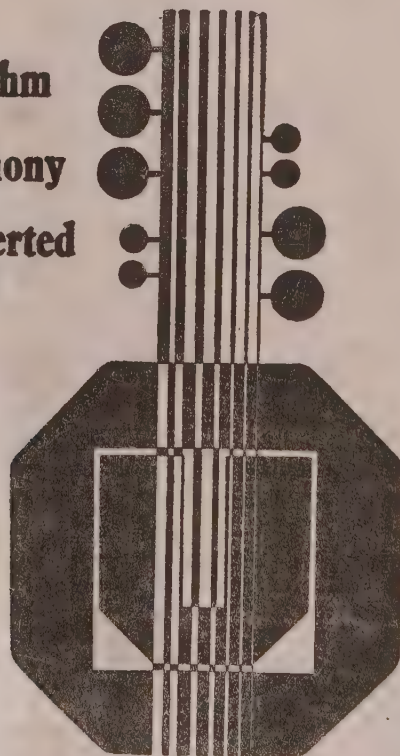
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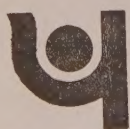
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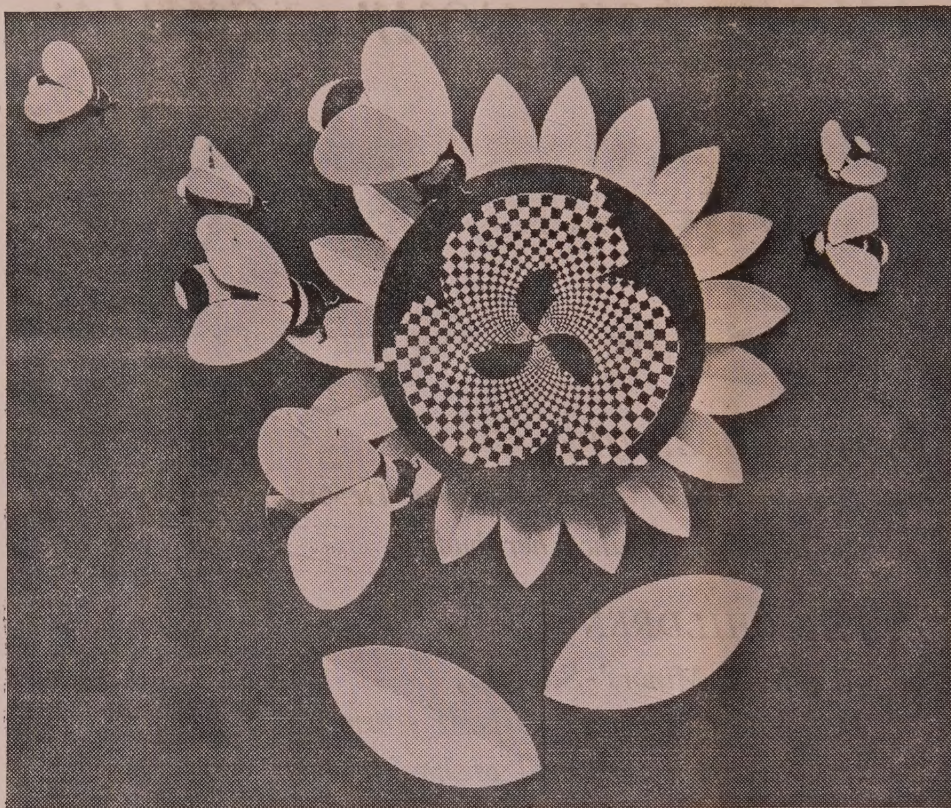
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